

The BURMA Act:

Authorizes sanctions on individuals and entities who helped stage the February 1 coup d'etat and are responsible for the subsequent repression of fundamental freedoms, human rights abuses, use of indiscriminate violence towards civilians, and other gross atrocities.

Prohibits the import of precious and semi-precious gemstones from Burma into the United States.

Authorizes a new position at the State Department, a Special Coordinator for Burmese Democracy, to promote an international effort to impose and enforce multilateral sanctions on Burma and coordinate United States Government interagency efforts on Burma.

Authorizes support to civil society and for humanitarian assistance in Burma, Bangladesh, Thailand, and the surrounding region.

Calls for the Department of State to make a genocide determination with regard to the persecution of the Rohingya.

Calls for the United States to pressure the United Nations to take more decisive action with regards to Burma.

By authorizing targeted sanctions against the Burmese military, the Burmese Administrative Council and affiliated entities, the bill holds accountable those responsible for the perpetration of the coup and the ensuing atrocities that have claimed over a thousand lives.

It has been a little over a year since the Burmese military staged its illegal and illegitimate coup, reversing years of reform and Burma's fragile transition to democracy.

The military regime has killed more than 1,728 people since February of 2021, including around 100 children, and illegally detained more than 13,084 people.

The violence toward its own citizens has displaced roughly 400,000 people within the country.

This brings the estimated total of internally displaced persons to 776,000 and of refugees and asylum-seekers in neighboring countries to more than 1 million.

People in Myanmar desperately need food, clean water and protection to survive.

The BURMA Act would address these gaps by funding humanitarian assistance and addressing issues in Myanmar including human rights violations, displacement, and armed conflict.

Having previously lived under military rule and authoritarianism for decades, the people of Myanmar responded to the coup with courage and resistance.

Democracy activists flooded the streets, formed a shadow government, and carried out a massive civil disobedience movement to shut down the machinery of the state.

The tragedy underway in Myanmar epitomizes the battle between democracy and authoritarianism.

However, the people of Myanmar have not received much support from the international community, in efforts to condemn this coup the United States must act now by expanding targeted sanctions to halt this.

The toll on the people of Burma has been truly staggering, under the military's harsh rule, no one is safe from violence, arbitrary detainment, military attack, and infringements on human rights.

I am optimistic that we will pass the BURMA Act to apply economic pressure, provide humanitarian support, and redouble diplomatic efforts against the military junta.

The people of Burma can no longer afford to wait, so neither should we.

I ask my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 5497 because these people who have survived crimes against humanity, discrimination, gender-based violence and forced displacement in Myanmar need the humanitarian assistance this bill would provide.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5497, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

UKRAINE INVASION WAR CRIMES DETERRENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7276) to direct the President to submit to Congress a report on United States Government efforts to collect, analyze, and preserve evidence and information related to war crimes and any other atrocities committed during the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine since February 24, 2022, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7276

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Ukraine Invasion War Crimes Deterrence and Accountability Act".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) in its premeditated, unprovoked, unjustified, and unlawful full-scale invasion of Ukraine that commenced on February 24, 2022, the military of the Government of the Russian Federation under the direction of President Vladimir Putin has committed war crimes that include but are not limited to—

(A) the deliberate targeting of civilians and injuring or killing of noncombatants;

(B) the deliberate targeting and attacking of hospitals, schools, and other non-military buildings dedicated to religion, art, science, or charitable purposes, such as the bombing of a theater in Mariupol that served as a shelter for noncombatants and had the word "children" written clearly in the Russian language outside;

(C) the indiscriminate bombardment of undefended dwellings and buildings;

(D) the wanton destruction of property not justified by military necessity;

(E) unlawful civilian deportations;

(F) the taking of hostages; and

(G) rape, or sexual assault or abuse;

(2) the use of chemical weapons by the Government of the Russian Federation in Ukraine would constitute a war crime, and engaging in any military preparations to use chemical weapons or to develop, produce, stockpile, or retain chemical weapons is prohibited by the Chemical Weapons Convention, to which the Russian Federation is a signatory;

(3) Vladimir Putin has a long record of committing acts of aggression, systematic

abuses of human rights, and acts that constitute war crimes or other atrocities both at home and abroad, and the brutality and scale of these actions, including in the Russian Federation republic of Chechnya, Georgia, Syria, and Ukraine, demonstrate the extent to which his regime is willing to flout international norms and values in the pursuit of its objectives;

(4) Vladimir Putin has previously sanctioned the use of chemical weapons at home and abroad, including in the poisonings of Russian spy turned double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia and leading Russian opposition figure Aleksey Navalny, and aided and abetted the use of chemical weapons by President Bashar al-Assad in Syria; and

(5) in 2014, the Government of the Russian Federation initiated its unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine which resulted in its illegal occupation of Crimea, the unrecognized declaration of independence by the so-called "Donetsk People's Republic" and "Luhansk People's Republic" by Russia-backed proxies, and numerous human rights violations and deaths of civilians in Ukraine.

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to collect, analyze, and preserve evidence and information related to war crimes and other atrocities committed during the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine that began on February 24, 2022, for use in appropriate domestic, foreign, and international courts and tribunals prosecuting those responsible for such crimes;

(2) to help deter the commission of war crimes and other atrocities in Ukraine by publicizing to the maximum possible extent, including among Russian and other foreign military commanders and troops in Ukraine, efforts to identify and prosecute those responsible for the commission of war crimes during the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine that began on February 24, 2022; and

(3) to continue efforts to identify, deter, and pursue accountability for war crimes and other atrocities committed around the world and by other perpetrators, and to leverage international cooperation and best practices in this regard with respect to the current situation in Ukraine.

SEC. 4. REPORT ON UNITED STATES EFFORTS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and consistent with the protection of intelligence sources and methods, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report, which may include a classified annex, describing in detail the following:

(1) United States Government efforts to collect, analyze, and preserve evidence and information related to war crimes and other atrocities committed during the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine since February 24, 2022, including a description of—

(A) the respective roles of various agencies, departments, and offices, and the inter-agency mechanism established for the coordination of such efforts;

(B) the types of information and evidence that are being collected, analyzed, and preserved to help identify those responsible for the commission of war crimes or other atrocities during the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022; and

(C) steps taken to coordinate with, and support the work of, allies, partners, international institutions and organizations, and nongovernmental organizations in such efforts.

(2) Media, public diplomacy, and information operations to make Russian military commanders, troops, political leaders and the Russian people aware of efforts to identify and prosecute those responsible for the

commission of war crimes or other atrocities during the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, and of the types of acts that may be prosecutable.

(3) The process for a domestic, foreign, or international court or tribunal to request and obtain from the United States Government information related to war crimes or other atrocities committed during the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate.

(2) **ATROCITIES.**—The term “atrocities” has the meaning given that term in section 6(2) of the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-441; 22 U.S.C. 2656 note).

(3) **WAR CRIME.**—The term “war crime” has the meaning given that term in section 2441(c) of title 18, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 7276, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 7276, the Ukraine Invasion War Crimes Deterrence and Accountability Act introduced by my good friend and the ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. MCCAUL.

I want to thank Mr. MCCAUL for working collectively across the aisle as we do on many bills, but on this important bill, for his leadership on it. It is very timely and very important.

Mr. Speaker, each day we see a growing body of horrifying evidence of atrocities that Russian troops have wreaked on Ukrainian citizens. Mr. MCCAUL and I traveled to Poland, and we saw with our own eyes the refugees fleeing Ukraine because of Putin's war; not knowing whether they would see their husbands or fathers or uncles ever again; not knowing what their tomorrow would be.

This week, the images, the videos, and the firsthand accounts from Bucha were nothing short of chilling, and as it did seeing the refugees cross the border in Poland, it pains my heart to know that this is likely just the tip of the iceberg of what Ukrainians have suffered.

□ 1245

In attempting to justify his war of choice on Ukraine, Putin's relentless dehumanization of Ukrainians has laid the foundation for atrocities so vile it churns one's stomach.

We have seen this before, Mr. Speaker. It is the same dehumanization that has led to every genocide before. I fear what we have seen in Bucha is happening throughout Ukraine right now, and it will only get worse.

Nothing we do on this floor today will erase the generational trauma that Putin's forces have inflicted on Ukrainians, but we can and must ensure that the United States of America is doing everything in its power to collect evidence that can be used to prosecute Russian war crimes and other atrocities. Hopefully, that will deter further systemic human rights abuses in this conflict.

H.R. 7276 would require the administration to detail efforts to collect, analyze, and preserve evidence of war crimes, and to describe the process through which a domestic, foreign, or international court or tribunal could request and obtain information related to war crimes or other atrocities from the United States.

Every day of this illegal and unprovoked war further unites the global community against Russia's aggression in Ukraine. The images that we continue to see day in and day out are shocking to the conscience and also a call to action.

To the leaders of the nations who have yet to condemn this barbaric war of choice, I ask them to please watch these videos of civilians being bombed and, as we did both in Poland and with those who visited us here in the House of Representatives, listen to the survivors who witnessed their neighbors and their friends shot in the streets or in their homes, some bound with their hands behind their backs.

The camera of history is rolling, Mr. Speaker, and it will remember those countries that remain silent.

Russia's aggression in Ukraine must stop. We must unequivocally condemn the atrocities that are being carried out by Putin and his Russian invading forces. Those who are responsible, Mr. Speaker, must be brought to justice, no matter how long it takes or how hard it may be.

The Ukraine Invasion War Crimes Deterrence and Accountability Act will help in collecting the necessary evidence so that we can do just that: Hold those individuals accountable for the atrocities that they have committed.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join and support this crucial legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my dear friend, Chairman MEEKS, for working with me on this important legislation. This is a historic time, and it is a historic bill.

This is the largest invasion in Europe since World War II, with war crimes in Europe the likes of which we haven't seen since my father's generation in my father's war.

Mr. Speaker, the world is watching, and history will judge us all by how we act, by our actions. As the chairman said, the tape is filming; the reel is filming this. We are seeing these horrific images coming out of Ukraine as I speak, and sadly, there will be many more. We have just hit the surface.

Corpses are littering the streets of Bucha, their hands tied behind their backs and bullets in their heads. Some are decapitated.

A pregnant woman, covered in blood—these monsters bombed a maternity hospital, for God's sake—as she gets wheeled out, holding on to her womb or baby. Sadly, and tragically, both she and her baby did not survive that day.

Mothers are raped in front of their children, and young girls are raped in front of their families—girls.

The bodies of families are half-buried together in shallow graves, with their hands still sticking out of the ground.

My God, what is happening in this world? I never imagined or thought I would see this in my lifetime. This is of centuries ago, not today.

The bombing of apartments and public buildings providing refuge to children and the elderly, including a theater in Mariupol that had the word “children” written outside so large in Russian that the satellites could see it—we could see it from satellites. What do the Russians do? They bombed it. They bombed it knowing that there were children inside.

Today, just today, most disturbing, we have reporting out of Ukraine that Russia is bringing in mobile crematoriums to deal with the carnage because there are so many bodies in the streets. They are bringing in mobile crematoriums in an effort to hide the evidence of their crimes.

These are Putin's war crimes, and he will be held responsible. He and his cronies, and the Russian troops who have carried them out, must be held accountable.

Sadly, these are not the first war crimes committed by Putin's troops, as the people of Chechnya, Georgia, and Syria can attest.

We cannot wait for the next atrocity before we act. We must do what we can now to deter Russian leaders, commanders, and troops in the field from committing further war crimes.

That is why we introduced this legislation. It will ensure the United States helps the people of Ukraine gather, analyze, and maintain the evidence of these war crimes.

It will also put Russian troops—I think “troops” is probably not the right word—these Russian monsters and their leaders on notice that the world is watching.

The world is watching them right now, and we are taking names. We are

taking the names of these war criminals; we are taking photographs; we are taking surveillance; and we are taking the satellite imagery to document this injustice, this crime against humanity. And we will seek justice.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of the bipartisan efforts that our committee has made. But on the topic, I just have to—my God, I can't believe we are here even talking about this. I can't believe this is actually happening in this world, in this century.

These horrific atrocities in Bucha have made one thing crystal clear: No country can remain neutral in the face of this evil. The entire world needs to rally against Mr. Putin and these war crimes. Passing this bill is a step forward to getting justice done.

I was a Federal prosecutor for a good part of my life, and I have dealt with a lot of victims. I have seen a lot of really awful things that man can do to mankind. I have to say, Mr. Speaker, this is probably—in fact, it is absolutely the worst thing I have seen in my lifetime.

The world is watching, and history will judge us all. All nations will judge us all by what we do here and now.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the leadership of our chairman and the working relationship with the ranking member.

Mr. Speaker, I was in Lithuania as the Russians were coming in, and I spent a couple of days there with the hopes and dreams of many people that, in actuality, there would not be an invasion of Russia into Ukraine, even though we were being briefed on the 30,000 to 40,000 troops in Belarus.

Even on that day, we spoke to Ukraine parliamentarians, who indicated that they were leaving the meeting we were in and taking a 17-hour trip back to Ukraine as their son was standing up to join the Ukrainian military.

Little did we expect—as some people said, “just a couple of days”—that we would be at a point where—we will not call it World War III, but we will call it the most brutal, vicious, and murderous effort in Europe and the world almost since World War II.

I cannot fathom the bodies found in a pit. I cannot understand moms and babies dying in the street. I cannot understand or accept the numbers of civilians targeted, their bodies strewn throughout the various cities.

The movement to the east, the destruction of Odessa, and the unwillingness of Vladimir Putin to even think of being serious at the peace table—it is important to say pronounced war crimes have been committed, that he must be at The Hague.

I believe Europe should be more pronounced in its annunciation. I frankly believe that there is a heavier penalty

that he must pay. I don't believe he should sit at another table of Western civilization.

Most importantly, I rise to support this legislation and believe America is right to insist on Mr. Putin being tried for war crimes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7276 the Ukraine Invasion War Crimes Deterrence and Accountability Act, to direct the President to submit a report to Congress on the United States efforts to collect and analyze evidence and information related to the war crimes committed by the Russian Federation during their full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

This legislation requires the Administration to detail the process our government will undertake to collect, analyze, and preserve evidence of these war crimes, so that perpetrators of these and other atrocities are held accountable.

There is no question of whether the Russian Federation, under the direction of Vladimir Putin has been defying the laws of war throughout its unprovoked, unjust, and unlawful invasion of Ukraine.

H.R. 7276 will ensure the U.S. maintains a coordinated effort to collect evidence to be used to prosecute Russian war crimes in Ukraine.

This bill will help to deter future war crimes by ensuring Russian troops and their commanders know the world is watching closely.

In the three decades since gaining its independence, Ukraine has sought its own path to sovereignty and has pursued closer economic, social, and political ties with the free market and democratic nations of the West.

Since 2013, the Russian Federation under the direction of President Vladimir Putin, has imposed a campaign of political, economic, and military aggression against Ukraine.

In February 2014, the Russian military began the invasion of eastern regions in Ukraine, including the Crimean Peninsula. The military also backed separatist insurgents in the Donbass region, where fighting has killed over 14,000 people.

Today the world is witnessing the unprovoked aggression and invasion ordered by Vladimir Putin.

President Putin and his associates must be held personally liable for the war crimes committed against the people of Ukraine.

Russia claims it is not attacking civilians, yet thousands of people have been killed, mostly from explosive weapons with a wide impact area, including shelling from heavy artillery and multi-launch rocket systems, and missile and air strikes.

Families are being separated by war, adults and children are being ruthlessly killed, and civilian infrastructure has been completely obliterated in parts of eastern Ukraine.

These reckless Russian attacks have leveled homes, preschools, post offices, museums, sports facilities, hospitals, and factories.

Power and gas lines have been severed, bridges and railway stations blown up intentionally to restrict refugee movement within the country.

Civilians have been killed in their cars, while waiting in bread lines, and while seeking treatment in hospitals.

Remnants of a missile were found in a Ukrainian zoo, residential neighborhoods have been shelled to pieces and morgues are overflowing with bodies.

Additionally, a rogue Russia is violently crushing political speech opposing the war from its own citizens.

As Russian ground forces advance in Ukraine, Ukrainians are sheltering from artillery shells and cruise missiles in subways and bomb shelters.

But in addition to the conventional military forces that Russia brings to bear, Russia has been utilizing nonconventional warfare for years.

Russia has been running a long-running campaign to cast Ukrainians as Nazis and the perpetrators of genocide against Russian-speakers in eastern Ukraine in order to justify an invasion.

The western world must continue to march in lockstep against this senseless Russian invasion of a sovereign nation.

We will make it clear to President Putin that there is no possibility for him to win this war when our alliances are as united and as fortified as they are now and will continue to be throughout the entire duration of this conflict.

Putin may seize ground, but he will never hold it.

Thank you, and I look forward to discussing recommended measures to hold Russia accountable for this manufactured war.

□ 1300

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL).

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 7276, the Ukraine Invasion War Crimes Deterrence and Accountability Act.

I am a proud cosponsor of this important legislation, and I thank Chairman MEEKS and the committee for working with Ranking Member MCCAUL on this critical, bipartisan bill.

Last weekend, the world saw in Bucha what the Ukrainian people have been telling us since the start of this invasion, that the Russians are indiscriminately torturing and executing Ukrainian men, women, and children.

It is important in these periods of conflict that the United States contribute to collecting, analyzing, and preserving critical evidence of war crimes and other atrocities.

For two decades Putin has gone unchecked and never paid a diplomatic or even economic price for his 22 years of mania. He has never faced, until he met the Ukrainians, true armed resistance. He leveled Grozny, destroyed historic Aleppo with his coconspirator and partner, Assad, and he waltzed into Crimea, Mr. Speaker, in 2014 without firing a shot. The line has been finally drawn in Ukraine.

This House, on a bipartisan basis, has worked to document Assad's mass murder in Syria. As a result of that work and the work of the United Nations Mechanism, we have had a recent conviction in Koblenz, Germany, of a Syrian intelligence official for crimes against humanity.

The U.N. recently approved an independent inquiry into Ukraine. That is precisely the same step of a decade ago in Syria. Enacting this legislation will ensure that the United States contributes to this effort.

I encourage all my colleagues to support this important bill, and I thank Mr. MEEKS and Mr. MCCAUL for their leadership.

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time at this moment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding, and I thank both Ranking Member MCCAUL and Chairman MEEKS for their extraordinary leadership on this important bill that is before us today.

I want to thank Mr. MEEKS for his eloquent remarks a moment ago summarizing the absolute atrocities that are being committed by Vladimir Putin, his military, and Lukashenko who is the enabler, the President of Belarus. The gentleman has described in vivid detail just how horrific this is. And as my good friend from Texas said a moment ago, my father fought in World War II as well in the South Pacific, but the crimes that were committed by imperial Japan and by the Nazis are now being replicated on a grand scale by Vladimir Putin. It has to stop, and it has to stop yesterday. So I rise in strong support of this legislation.

Madam Speaker, on March 8 I chaired a hearing at the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission entitled "Accountability for Russia's War Crimes and Aggression Against Ukraine." The day before I also introduced a resolution calling for accountability for Vladimir Putin for his crimes against the Ukrainian people and his aggression against Ukraine.

The witnesses could not have been more clear that delay is denial and that we need to act now.

I was very much involved with the court in the former Yugoslavia and very involved with the court for Sierra Leone. David Crane led that effort. I was very involved with the Rwandan court and tried to get a court for Syria but failed. I pushed hard for it with a resolution on this floor, and the House did pass it.

But the key here is timeliness. Don't wait.

The ICC, while it may do some good here, and they do have an investigation that they have instituted, the ICC has been notoriously slow. They have had less than 10 convictions over 20 years. Now, if that venue works, great. But my concern—and I think the concern shared by many, particularly in the NGO community—is that there needs to be another venue stood up quickly that could make the difference.

At the March hearing, David Crane, the founding Chief Prosecutor of the U.N. Special Court for Sierra Leone, talked about an international tribunal created by the United Nations General Assembly. We are all thinking, Hey, when it gets to the Security Council, the Security Council will have two ve-

toes at least. It will be Russia, and it will be China. Not so in the General Assembly. They can stand up a court and they can do it tomorrow that would indict Vladimir Putin on the next day.

There is certainly enough evidence—keep building the evidence, of course—but there is enough evidence to do it right now, and that, hopefully, will tell everybody around him that the time will come when you will be in the dock as well.

I remember meeting with Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia and going to Bosnia and Croatia many times during that horrific war in the Balkans. Time and time again he thought he was untouchable, total impunity because of that. He killed so many because there was no accountability. Well, he went to The Hague as part of the ad hoc tribunal, and he died while the proceedings were underway. But he would have been held to account.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this. We have already had one vote in the General Assembly, 141 out of 198 voted and a number of people abstained. You only need a simple majority.

I did ask our number two at the State Department, at GREGORY MEEKS' hearing earlier today, to take back to the administration the idea of looking at all the venues. But let's get a court constituted immediately. If the ICC wants to step in at some point, fine. But indict Putin. Indict him, and you will see some people running like rats on the ship who were a part of his regime knowing that they, too, will be held accountable and sent to prison for the rest of their lives.

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Madam Speaker, we rise today not as Republicans or Democrats but as Americans and as a united Congress on behalf of the American people condemning these atrocities.

Madam Speaker, there is a group called the Wagner Group that is entering Ukraine right now. They are the worst of the worst. They are mercenaries. They are cold-blooded killers. Mr. Putin has sent them to Africa to kill people in Mali and Libya, and they have been in the Donbas previously. They have a saying, these Wagner thugs, these monsters, that our business is killing, and business is good.

This is sick. They rape women and girls. They kill for a living, and, yes, now they are entering Ukraine.

Sadly, Madam Speaker, I am not sure Bucha is the last we are going to see of this, and when the dust clears from Mariupol, God knows what we are going to find there. God only knows. When they are talking about mobile crematoriums to hide the evidence of so much carnage and so many bodies to be burned. This has to stop.

We are standing together united as Americans condemning this, and as a

former Federal prosecutor, yes, to indict Mr. Putin for his crimes against humanity.

Mr. Putin thought his legacy after this fiasco was going to be reclaiming the glory of the empire. He would be known as great as the czars or maybe Stalin. Maybe he is like Stalin. His legacy is not going to be reclaiming the empire. His legacy is going to be that of a war criminal. That will impact his psyche, and that will impact all those around him, including his oligarchs, that no one is safe here, that you will be indicted internationally, and that you will be brought to justice.

For without justice in the face of these crimes against humanity, what good are we? So this is an historic moment.

I want to thank the chairman, as always, on this committee for working with me to stand up against evil, because that is exactly what this is.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Madam Speaker, what we are witnessing Russian troops do in Ukraine represents some of the worst of humankind. Right now, the world is watching horrifying war crimes taking place. The world is watching the extent to which Putin is willing to flout international norms and values in the pursuit of its brutality, and the world is also watching what we as a nation are going to do about it.

The Department of State has officially concluded that Russian forces have committed war crimes in Ukraine which were made vividly clear by the horrifying images emerging over this past weekend from Bucha. Investigations into these war crimes are already beginning and must continue.

I am saying today, as chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee working along with my friend and partner, the ranking member, MIKE MCCAUL, we will work tirelessly to make sure that justice is delivered and that the administration works strenuously in concert with partners and allies to this end because meaningful justice for these crimes helps prevent such atrocities in the future.

This legislation requires the administration to detail efforts to preserve evidence and hold perpetrators accountable for the atrocities that are committed and to detail the means for domestic, hybrid, or international courts and their tribunals to request access to such information.

This legislation, the Ukrainian Invasion War Crimes Deterrence and Accountability Act, will ensure that victims and perpetrators alike know that the United States of America and the world, we have got to get those off the seat, those who abstain in the U.N., they see the same thing. We need them to stand and have a voice.

The world is watching. The world will hold Putin and the Russian Armed

Forces and those who are in their duma and those who keep pushing this war that is caused by one man, Vladimir Putin—these abhorrent war crimes which continue to go on—accountable. It is a war of choice that Putin has decided to place on Ukraine.

That is why, Madam Speaker, I am so proud to partner with MIKE MCCAUL in bringing H.R. 7276 to the floor today so that my children, my grandchildren, my great-great-grandchildren, will know how I stood at this time in history and how the United States Congress stood at this time in history.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON LEE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 7276, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

□ 1315

RELATING TO THE CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE REPORT 117-284 AND AN ACCOMPANYING RESOLUTION

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1023 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1023

Resolved, That if House Report 117-284 is called up by direction of the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol: (a) all points of order against the report are waived and the report shall be considered as read; and (b)(1) an accompanying resolution offered by direction of the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol shall be considered as read and shall not be subject to a point of order; and (2) the previous question shall be considered as ordered on such resolution to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided among and controlled by Representative Thompson of Mississippi, Representative Cheney of Wyoming, and an opponent, or their respective designees.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WELCH). The gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. RESCHENTHALER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution,

all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule, House Resolution 1023. The rule provides for consideration of the resolution accompanying House Report 117-284 under a closed rule if the report is called up by direction of the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol. The rule provides 1 hour of debate equally divided among and controlled by Chairman THOMPSON, Vice Chair CHENEY, and an opponent.

Mr. Speaker, if 90 percent of success in life is just showing up, then 90 percent of acting in contempt of Congress is not showing up by failing to respond to multiple subpoenas you have been lawfully served. The rest of contempt is not turning over documents you have been ordered to produce and acting with open disregard and scorn for the rule of law, Congress, and representatives of the American people.

Neither Dan Scavino nor Peter Navarro has shown up in response to repeated congressional subpoenas. They have blown us off completely.

Neither Mr. Scavino nor Mr. Navarro has produced a single document or offered 1 minute of testimony in response to the subpoenas sent by the House of Representatives.

While more than 800 Americans have come forward voluntarily or properly responded to congressional subpoenas, which are orders under penalty of law, saying you must show up to testify under oath and invoke any asserted privileges in person, Scavino and Navarro have followed Steve Bannon and are acting as if they are way too busy and way too important to bother with the mere United States House of Representatives. They think that having worked for a former President of the United States excuses them from complying with lawful orders.

This is clearly false; this is clearly wrong; and we must make an emphatic statement about it today.

Mr. Speaker, I ask America to consider this: If your son or daughter were subpoenaed to come testify before the Congress of the United States, would you advise them to sit home on the couch and blow it off? I know I wouldn't.

Every year, thousands of Americans are held in criminal contempt for ignoring their legal obligations to comply with a lawful subpoena issued by courts or legislative bodies.

Here in the District of Columbia, you can be sent to jail for 6 months and

fined \$1,000 for acting in contempt of a subpoena and not showing up. We have checked on multiple days and found, on any given day, 7, 8, 10, or a dozen people are being found guilty of contempt in the courts of the District of Columbia.

That is the exact same criminal offense that Mr. Scavino and Mr. Navarro committed, and that is the exact same penalty they are facing for their misconduct.

Each of these witnesses was given ample and repeated opportunities to comply, opportunities that continue to this day. Yet, they openly and brazenly flout the authority of the Congress and mock their own personal duty to comply with the rule of law.

Legal contempt exists for those who act with open disregard or disobedience of the law, especially when acting with scorn for the authority of government. It exists precisely for cases like this.

Here is what has happened with Mr. Scavino. In September of last year, the committee issued its first of three subpoenas. We asked him to come testify before us on October 15, 2021, last year.

When he could not be found to actually accept service of the first subpoena, we issued a second subpoena, asking him to appear before the committee on October 28, 2021. He told the committee that wasn't enough time for him; he needed 1 extra week.

We generously gave him a week, and we set a third deposition date of November 4, 2021, but he didn't come on November 4 either. Instead, he requested another extension.

Bending over backward to accommodate this witness, we set a fourth deposition date of November 12, 2021. Still, that wasn't enough time for him.

We acted in good faith again, and assuming he was acting in good faith, we set a fifth deposition date of November 19. When that day arrived, did he finally show up to do his civic duty? No, he did not. Instead, he waited until the eve of the deposition and then, for the first time, challenged the service of the subpoena.

Out of an abundance of deference and caution, and to make every effort to demonstrate the respect for the rule of law that Scavino was not showing, we issued yet a third subpoena inviting him to come testify before us once again on December 1, 2021.

Finally, with Scavino completely out of excuses and the committee out of patience, his final deposition date of December 1 arrived, and he simply did not show up.

Six times this committee invited Scavino to testify, and six times he stood us up. He stood the American people up. He refused to testify before Congress about what he knows about the most dangerous and sweeping assault on the United States Congress since the War of 1812, which was by a foreign power.

But even after he failed to show up in December, the committee held an open door for Mr. Scavino to come in and